



13 July 2026

IOTC CIRCULAR 2026-29

Dear Madam / Sir

REQUEST FOR OBSERVER STATUS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES (IUCN)

Please find attached a request letter from the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) to participate as an Observer to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission processes.

In accordance with Rule XIV of the IOTC Rules of Procedure, Contracting Parties of the Commission may wish to allow the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) to participate as an Observer given their interest in the IOTC as stipulated in the attached letter. Thus, unless any objections are received within 30 days of the date of this Circular, the IOTC Secretariat will consider that approval has been granted for the Executive Secretary to issue an invitation to the potential Observer to attend IOTC meetings accordingly.

Yours sincerely

Paul de Bruyn
Executive Secretary

Attachments:

- Letter from the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)

Distribution

IOTC Contracting Parties: Australia, Bangladesh, China, Comoros, European Union, France (Territories), India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Rep of), Japan, Kenya, Rep. of Korea, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, United Rep. of Tanzania, Thailand, United Kingdom, Yemen. **Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties:** Liberia, Panama. **Intergovernmental Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations.** Chairperson IOTC. **Copy to:** FAO Headquarters, FAO Representatives to CPCs.

This message has been transmitted by email only



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Mr Adam Ziyad,
Chairperson, Indian Ocean Tuna
Commission (IOTC)
c/o IOTC Secretariat
Blend Seychelles Building (2nd floor)
Providence
PO Box 1011
Victoria Mahé – SEYCHELLES
By email: IOTC-Secretariat@fao.org

10 July 2026

Subject: Request for IUCN Observer Status - Indian Ocean Tuna Commission

Dear Chairperson,

The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) hereby requests admission as an intergovernmental organisation Observer to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and its subsidiary bodies, in accordance with Rule XIV of the IOTC Rules of Procedure and the applicable guidelines for granting Observer Status at IOTC meetings.

As per the guidelines for granting Observer Status at IOTC meetings, we provide the following organisational details and supporting information:

Name, address, telephone and fax number of the organization:

IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
Rue Mauverney 28
1196 Gland
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 999 0000
Fax: +41 22 999 0002
Website: www.iucn.org

IUCN is an international intergovernmental organisation with Observer status to the United Nations General Assembly. Established in 1948, IUCN is a membership Union composed of States, government agencies, non-governmental organisations, Indigenous peoples' organisations, scientific institutions, and a global network of experts. Through its Members, Commissions, Secretariat, and knowledge products, IUCN provides independent scientific assessments, technical expertise, policy guidance, and convening support to governments and partners around the world.

The mission of IUCN, as set out in its Statutes, is to influence, encourage, and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. To achieve this mission, IUCN mobilises a global network of Members, experts, and partners; produces and disseminates scientific knowledge; supports the development and implementation of environmental law and policy; and promotes effective international cooperation for the conservation and sustainable use of nature.

IUCN has long-standing experience contributing to international environmental, fisheries-related, and biodiversity processes by providing independent scientific and technical input to support evidence-based decision-making. This includes engagement with multilateral environmental agreements, regional and global policy processes, and intergovernmental fora relevant to biodiversity, species conservation, sustainable use, protected and conserved areas, ecosystem management, and marine conservation.

This expertise is supported by IUCN's seven expert Commissions, including the Species Survival Commission (SSC), the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), the Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), the World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL), the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), the Commission on Education and Communication (CEC), and the Climate Action Commission (CAC). The SSC alone brings together more than 11,000 experts working across taxonomic groups and regions, including specialist groups with direct relevance to the work of IOTC, such as the IUCN SSC Tuna and Billfish Specialist Group and the IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group.

IUCN's request for Observer Status is particularly relevant to the work of IOTC given the Commission's mandate for tuna and tuna-like species in the Indian Ocean, as well as its ongoing work on ecosystems, bycatch, data collection, and species-specific conservation and management measures. Through its expert networks, IUCN can provide independent scientific and technical expertise, where useful and appropriate, on species status, data needs, bycatch mitigation, spatial information, ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management, and the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity.

IUCN would be pleased to contribute, as appropriate and in support of IOTC processes, to discussions relevant to:

- the conservation and management of tuna, tuna-like species, sharks, rays, and other species that might interact with tuna and tuna-like species fisheries;
- the use of the best available scientific information for commercially important and vulnerable species;
- bycatch mitigation approaches and practical lessons from other regions;
- improved reporting, identification, and monitoring of retained and bycaught species;
- spatial information that may support ecosystem-based fisheries management in the Indian Ocean;
- technical information relevant to species listed under international agreements, where useful to IOTC Members; and
- coordination and information exchange with other relevant international and regional processes.

Through the IUCN SSC Tuna and Billfish Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group, and the wider IUCN network, IUCN can help connect IOTC discussions with current scientific assessments and conservation tools, including the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRAs), global and regional conservation strategies, and technical guidance developed with governments, scientists, and fisheries experts.

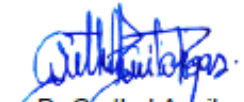
IUCN believes that its recognised scientific expertise, intergovernmental status, extensive membership, and global expert network position it to contribute constructively and substantively to the work of IOTC and its subsidiary bodies. Its participation as an Observer would be undertaken in a technical and scientific capacity, with the aim of supporting evidence-based discussions and contributing relevant expertise where requested or appropriate.

We would be grateful if this request could be considered under the appropriate provisions of the IOTC Rules of Procedure and shared with Members of the Commission as required.

We remain at your disposal to provide any further information or documentation necessary for the examination of this request.

Please accept, Chairperson, the assurance of our highest consideration.

Sincerely,



Dr Grethel Aguilar
Director General